

MAY, 1968

No. 228

# Guide

A PUBLICATION OF THE PAULIST  
INSTITUTE FOR RELIGIOUS RESEARCH

The Open Parish

The Hierarchy

Authority and Community <sup>(2)</sup>

CHRISTIAN READING ROOM  
FRANCISCAN THEO. SEM.  
OLD MISSION  
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93101





## Paul J. Hallinan

Vatican Council II cut deeply into the long-established outlooks and habits of Catholic bishops. And few members of the episcopacy anywhere were as hospitable to these transformations or as effective in carrying out their many consequences as Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan.

God had prepared him well for the unique role of leadership he played in this crucial era in American Catholicism. An excellent course at Notre Dame and St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland, led to the priesthood and pastoral work at Cleveland's Cathedral, a chaplaincy in the army and, later, to distinguished work in the Newman Apostolate.

Although he came to be associated especially with liturgical reform—serving as Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Liturgy—he was equally in the forefront of the great movements and deeply involved in the issues of our time. Civil Rights, Youth, the reassessment of our commitment in Vietnam, diocesan and parish experimentation—all these won his concern, talents and his forthright support.

Charleston and Atlanta came to benefit by his exceptional qualities of spirit, mind and heart. And his serene Christian balance and progressivism brought him increasing invitations to speak and to write on a variety of topics. But his central theme was always *aggiornamento*, which his genial, quiet persuasiveness did so much to advance.

After one of the sessions of the Council, he stopped at the Paulist Seminary in Washington to rest before going on to Atlanta. Thoughtlessly, we plied him with questions, which he willingly discussed until the early hours of the morning. It was an unforgettable privilege to observe intimately the rare qualities which served us all so well. Thoughtful, generous and candid—he could be independent without obstinacy, courageous without pugnacity.

Vatican II could not but mold a type of bishop with a new style, and through the world, Church leaders slowly began to emerge who exemplified these new characteristics. And Paul J. Hallinan of the United States won and maintained a high place in this most distinguished company.

John T. McGinn, C.S.P.

---

### Guide, No. 228, May, 1968

Published 10 times a year (monthly except June-July, August-September when bi-monthly) by The Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle in the State of New York, 2852 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025. Second class postage paid at Ridge-wood, N.J., and additional mailing offices. Rates 1 year, \$1.00; 10¢ a copy; 5¢ in bulk to Seminarians.

Archbishop Hallinan

# The Open Parish For Our Time

Dreams can be dangerous, for they are too elusive. And visions are dangers, too—they can be upsetting. I recount this recent dream for what it's worth. I think it's worth a vision.

... Somehow I had become pastor of the old parish where I had been baptized, driven, nourished, and confirmed. But a reading of these foregoing chapters on the parish had led me into a fitful trance, and in it the dramatis personae of old St. Mary's was radically different from the cast of parish characters I was familiar with.

One of the ushers, Dr. Daniel Callahan, had just said, "Any parish that succeeds in making a large number of people feel isolated is a failure." The editor of *Cross Currents*, Mr. Joseph Cunneen, was moonlighting for our parish bulletin. For this morning, he had just written, "Although the altar is the center of parish life, this life must radiate from that center into every avenue of human concern."

Doris Grumbach, who always used to refer to this parish "life" in quotes, was now president of our PTA. From a neighboring parish, Father Henry Browne often stopped in to serve as *ombudsman*, a go-between for the emergent laity and the merging clergy.

Actually I was not so much the pastor as the senior member of a team. I took my turn at everything, but whenever I saw Callahan and Cunneen in the front pew, I asked Father Gerard Sloyan, one of our

parish priests, to give the homily. The other member of our team was Father Daniel Mallette, but we didn't see much of him. While out applying "band-aids" for society's wounds, he kept pushing for more, for what he called "guts involvement" in the lives of those in need. He seemed to have a thing about "rectory priests," but his teamwork was excellent.

Down the street was Dr. Martin Marty's Lutheran church. While writing cogently for *The Christian Century*, he also served Protestantism well by speaking up in Catholic circles. We often exchanged dinner invitations, especially after one of my parishioners, Dr. Leonard Swidler, successfully lobbied down at City Hall for better paving between the two churches. "Ecumenism in the Concrete" was his slogan. . . .

Just as Jim O'Gara was saying, "The Church *must* take shape in *this* place, in *this* culture, in *this* time," I woke up. This is the kind of parish, priests, and people I wanted to serve. But like all heavenly situations, it is not yet for us. The parish of which I dreamed will never exist, short of a miracle. There are not enough O'Gara's,

---

By special arrangement with P. J. Kenedy & Sons. From "The Postconciliar Parish," edited by James O'Gara, in which this article of Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan appeared as a concluding chapter.



Sloyan's, Grumbach's and Marty's. They have been spread too thin over the Christian scene. They, and thousands of others, are the sprouts of this hoped-for Second Spring in the hearts of God's People. Yet, if Vatican II is truly to succeed, these years must be a seed-time for us all. In the new pastoral accounting, the ninety-nine secure ones must go out, with the shepherd, after the lost one.

John XXIII's classic distinction is the boundary line of this updating: "The *substance* of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing; the *way in which it is presented* is another." And a healthy pragmatism has imposed this task chiefly on priests and people in that context with which they are most familiar—their own parish.

### PARISH INFLUENCE

Statements by popes, councils, and bishops are, by their nature, broad and more general than particular. To many Catholics they appear irrelevant. Remember the gap between Leo XIII's stern strictures on the abuses of industrialization, and the apathy of the average parishioner? More currently, when Paul VI fervently and repeatedly begs the great powers to disarm for peace, how many sermons are preached to help Catholics in this agonizing choice?

Although the Catholic climate is more highly charged today than it was in 1962, the average Catholic is still doing business at the old parish stand. He hears the Vatican Council as though it were the voice of well-meaning, but not very practical, apostles of a latter day. He may take his platitudes from the Universal Church, but his attitudes still come from his parish.

The parish, in whatever form it appears, is our most immediate everyday point of Christian contact. Everyday? Well, hardly. According to his book, *God's People on the March* (1966), Bishop Wilhelm Bickers, one of our most dynamic churchmen until his death last year, saw some truth in a recent definition: "A parish is a place where the church is empty during the week, the rectory is empty in the daytime, and the school is empty in the evenings."

But is this void only in the buildings? Surely most priests' minds and hearts are filled with fervor, new plans, and the routine of daily tasks. More laymen today are asking good questions, and seeking a viable bond between what they hear on Sunday and do all week. The emptiness in too many places seems to be in the parish itself.

It is not graphically teaching one how to be a Christian in the full sense . . . to be ready to meet and help our fellow-parishioners . . . to go out into the other-worldly atmosphere of a busy, distracted world. Is today's Catholic carrying "the light of all nations"?—which incidentally was the title of the key document, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, the greatest single achievement of Vatican II.

The parish, in its broadest sense, began on Pentecost as a "meeting together" (Acts 2:1). It came to be identified as the "assembly" in Peter's short epistles and Paul's more discursive writings. St. Ignatius of Antioch saw the assembly as an orderly, structured body, essentially connected with the position of the bishop. It came together, a sign of unity, "to render thanks and praise to God." To this functional definition, St. Hippolytus in the third century added its dynamism: the coming together of the whole People of God, under the presidency of the clergy, "*for the concelebration of Christ's saving deeds.*"

### NEW LOOK

Pushed this way and that by sociological shifts, the exactitude of canon law and history's pressures, the parish has survived the centuries, and it probably will continue to do so. Today it is being called too big and impersonal, too much concerned with money and facilities, too tenacious in preserving organizations that have lost touch with the world. There is evidence of weak intercommunication between bishops, priests, and people. And our American society has brought about a high mobility of membership. People move. This makes spiritual continuity difficult, and, I was reminded by one fund-raising pastor, "One day's pledge is tomorrow's departure and default!"

Dr. Callahan writes, with much sensi-



tivity toward today's parish, "It is remarkable that parishes have any vitality at all." Can this vitality be increased? This will take place, in my opinion, only if we boldly shift the axis of pastoral theology. At one pole must be the assembly of the New Testament, when two or three were gathered in Jesus' name, and he was there in their midst. The other pole must be located right in Main Street, even when Main Street begins in inner city, becomes Manners Avenue after ten miles, and ends up as Mandeville Place in the affluent outer city.

### WORD OF GOD

Instead we have settled for poles dug not in the Bible, but deep in our own sentimental past, and in settings as far from contemporary experience as medieval Europe, the Age of Enlightenment, or the Immigrant Church of late 19th century in New York, Chicago, or Wisconsin. No wonder the energy is weak and dissipated.

But once we are determined to relocate that first pole in the Scriptures, the energy will flow with vigor. Our people are still unconsciously starving for the Word of God, whether priest or lay lector reads the lesson. (It will not come in the packaged parish bulletin, a pamphlet rack for children, nor in a "sermon" that turns out to be a rambling series of pious thoughts or a cross tirade against communism or contraception. The Catholic can surely be expected to understand that unless religious formation is well served, little else matters. Father Sloyan adds that "The Church exists to proclaim God's Word." Despite all [the parish's] shortcomings . . . as an effective social unit, it too exists. "As yet it has no rival in the work of bringing the Word of God to men." In a homely speech-figure, the parish must pull up its socks!

Meanwhile, where is the other pole?—in the old ruts or worse, the theological vacuums of the past? The parish must live by what it *is*, not what it *was*. The Church never intended to measure the functions of the parish by its history, its structure, or its boundaries. Karl Rahner and Bernard Häring agree that in the age of the Apostles, "every possible sociological

link" was used in order "to make contact with man, and offer him Christian salvation."

Generally speaking, the parish has failed to experience "the hour of greatness destined for it by the Council of Trent," as Father Alex Blöchliger, spiritual advisor to students in Bern, Switzerland, observes in his book *The Modern Parish Community* (1965). Trent revived and nurtured its fading roots, but what might have been a rich harvest was stifled by legalistic weeds and our own absent-mindedness. There has always been a core of priests—probably a majority—with Christ-like traits. I recall from the 1930's a priest whose Christian love for all men brought him to an apostolate then reckoned quite suspect—a close and kindly association with Protestant ministers. We are a variety of types, and I have met all kinds, but apathy to people has been the exception, not the rule.

### NEW OUTLOOK

The world is watching the Church today. More accurately, it is watching to see whether Vatican II made any difference. Despite the confusions we are experiencing, a decent optimism is in order for the very good reason that more Catholics are concerned about their parishes. Some are coming to know their bishop and priests much better, and are surprised to find that respect and obedience can coexist with informality, warmth, and Christian partnership. Others are insisting that the old-fashioned parish straighten up and fly right: in sound spiritual direction, liturgy, music, and art, in a sound social interaction with the world, and a better vision of Christ's one Church, which is now seen more clearly through the lens of ecumenism. Others want new forms: Masses in the home, Bible-vigils with Protestants, university parishes, experiments in liturgy and unity, a service of worship for children and other special groups, a married diaconate, more realistic moves toward peace, away from poverty, and opening up a new depth in marriage and family life.

The new "parish-without-lines" is being studied in Atlanta. Those who desire



it want a deeper involvement in spiritual concerns, a community-by-choice, and a more insistent "going out" to the city and its problems. It is worth a try. Others sense in it an exclusive elite, possibly a devious spirit, and the draining off of potential leaders from the task force badly needed in the parishes to reform their own way of life.

### MORE FLEXIBILITY

Two comments in this book have helped me to guide these pioneers. Daniel Callahan supplied one of them when he wrote that "The geographical parish has the great advantage of forcing very disparate assortments of people to live, worship, and work together." But he and Joseph Cunneen both recommend supplementary communities *where the people are* (on the job, in slums, at play, in the university, in the shop or the plant). Cunneen would encourage "a great flexibility by having additional priests assigned to assure a greater presence of the Church." Father Browne has also noted the natural tendency of occupational groupings to form worshipping subgroups.

This is going on, to the best of my knowledge, in a majority of American dioceses. Only fifty diocesan priests, for example, serve the seventy counties of northern Georgia. Perhaps their finest natural trait is flexibility. They have celebrated the Mass in hundreds of homes, in a large shopping center during Lent, in hotels and motels for special gatherings. Several parishes are trying the child-by-child timing of First Communion. A convent chaplain arranges the private confessions of the Sisters in a communal setting with a homily, and scriptural readings and prayers in common.

Almost every priest in this archdiocese wears at least two hats except the former vicar general, now in his late sixties, who resigned as rector of the Cathedral to become a full-time spiritual counsellor at the huge state mental hospital. And in a pre-evangelical sense, I gladly blessed the efforts of a Glenmary Father who held the hog-calling championship of rural Lumpkin County for two years. When he wasn't calling hogs, he was working like a horse.

To his neighbors who knew only a handful of Catholics, the Church will never seem foreign or irrelevant again! Increasing numbers of laity, with our Sisters, have given northern Georgia a new look at the Catholic Church. And in the process, we are all getting a better look at ourselves.

It will take time. But if Vatican II is to work, there must come a moment when a Catholic walks away from Sunday Mass aware that the beauty of the Lord's House comes, not from marble, but rather from the interchange of love—God and man, parents and children, priest and layman. He will be more conscious of his own participation in this exercise of the priestly office of Christ, impressed somewhat more by the homily and singing. Having received the Body of Christ, he will walk without blame and without blasphemy. He knows that he and his family cannot be partner to the raw blasphemy of acting all week as though God did not exist.

### AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

Men must talk with each other, work and argue with them, share a cup of coffee or a beer with them, pray with them—if we are to go beyond our familiar cliques to the richer community of the whole. There is a time for family life, and for solitude, too. But, in Callahan's words, men must be "physically and mentally touching each other, . . . day in and day out." (Regrettably, for many Catholics this "touching" is only the crunch of fenders in the parish parking lot of a Sunday morning.) The need of intercommunication is a truth of sociology. But it is a truth of theology, too. The Constitution on the Liturgy, speaking of man's most noble action, the Mass, insists that our participation must be conscious, intelligible, active, and *social*. Then it will become for us that "source and summit" that God intends.

In a chapter called "Every Parish Is a Council," Bishop Bekkers probed our response to the Vatican Council and to the faith that stimulated it. As he wrote, "To believe in your husband, or wife, or doctor, or God is something else [than just a nod of recognition] . . . something much richer." We must dare, he said, to bring into our



whole life the consequences of our belief. It reminded me of a short piece Father John Courtney Murray once wrote for Catholic graduates on a secular campus: "Congratulations, you didn't lose your faith! What an empty compliment to pay!" Is this the dimension of our God-given gift of revelation and belief?

What will the priest do, in this new response to the opportunities of parish life? He will be the minister of the Word and the Eucharist, the healer of men's wounds. He will be the gadfly searching out and stimulating the best. He will be the catalyst for small groups as they work toward consensus, the partner with the layman in God's plan of reconciliation and redemption. His office is necessary, but the priest himself is quite dispensable. God placed him in this difficult role, and his people acknowledge its urgency. But he himself cannot think too much about it or talk about it. He can only marvel, as the Apostle Paul said, that God chooses the weak to confound the wise.

### FOR THE WORLD

Cardinal Suhard of Paris was one of the early prophets of this renewal. He was relevant twenty years before the adjective was discovered. He probed for evidences of Christianity beyond the lists of christenings, weddings, and funerals. In *Growth and Decline*, his greatest pastoral letter, he begged his people not to fall to the "temptation of Tabor." This century is no time to echo Peter's "Lord, it is good for us to be here." If we stay on Tabor, how can we carry out the essential Christian mission? The human love that summed up Christ's Second Commandment knows no bias of creed or race or social class. It cannot be shut up in an egoism that is satisfied with what it has, or an exclusiveness that shuts out the world.

In *Priests Among Men*, the aging Cardinal suggested to the priests of Paris a fine practice in "going out." Thus, "He must each evening, before God, set out once again two maps of the parish. Patiently and zealously, he should compare, detail by detail, these two 'Master Plans.'" One is the Christian community, with its islands of influence, acquired positions, and habitual

practices. The other is the new society with its swift expansion, centers of spontaneous interests, and unexpected stirrings. We think at once of the old-fashioned "tight parish" and its contrast with the bursting metropolis, suburbs, and slums; theaters and television; the riots in Newark, Detroit, and Watts. Abbé Michonneau, another Catholic activist from France, suggested that continued walking tours of the parish are even better than the two maps!

### CURRENT CHALLENGE

To paraphrase Chesterton's words about Christianity, the parish has not really been tried and found wanting. Too often it simply has not been tried. There is no reason why it cannot go about its work more flexibly. It needs better interchange and more relevance, with one foot in the path of the Gospel, the other in the way of the needy. Experiments to make the sacred elements inspire our profane lives can be welcomed if we avoid the error that the present pope has labelled "desacralization." If all this be gradually but surely done, the parish will not seem like a test tube for those who are left isolated. It will be the "Light of Nations" where ordinary people as well as those better advantaged will be guided and warmed.

The ideal parish will not be born in Utopia, a millenium, or a dream. It will be born in the minds and hearts of people, priests and bishops. And it will take time and it will be discouraging. There is a Gospel precedent that can be the bedside book of the bishop, the priest, the religious, and the responsible layman who set out to sow Christ's seed. Matthew records Our Lord's parable in Chapter 13.

He distinguishes the ways in which the seed is received . . . eaten up by birds, scorched because there were no roots, choked by thorns. Yet some fell on good ground and gave good fruit.

May we understand Christ's challenge, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" in this contemporary way? The Scriptures, the homily, the catechesis, books and journals scatter the seed, the Word of God, lavishly over the earth. But some is immediately devoured by the forces of evil, the

devil, our own weakness and sins. Sometimes the seed is well received, but the trials of life quickly stunt the root. Again, the seed is choked in the traffic and pollution of the secular city, and there is no gain. But some of the seeding takes root, sends up sprouts and grows into branches,

flowers, and fruit. The yield, in Our Lord's metaphor, is diverse and generous.

As the parish is revitalized, can Christian optimism prompt the hope that this four-way partition will change, and the good ground will give a larger and more gracious harvest? I am sure it can.

Joseph H. Grispino, S.M.

# The Hierarchy Of The Church

Many thinkers agree that Charles Davis made several just criticisms against the Church, but they disagree with his leaving the Church. One of these criticisms concerns the hierarchy, and is shared by many Catholics and Protestants alike. It may be phrased thus: Is the present structure of the Roman Catholic hierarchy what Christ wanted? Or, is the present hierarchical structure in accordance with what we find in the New Testament?

Our procedure will be as follows: We shall discuss the hierarchy as described in the New Testament, beginning with apostles, deacons, deaconesses, teachers, prophets, and presbyters-bishops. Then we shall come to grips with the central issue—the emergence of the monarchical bishop. There will then follow a brief summary of the problems of ordination-succession, “apostolic delegates,” collegiality ecclesiastical authority, and finally a word on the relation between charism and hierarchy.

**The Apostles:** It seems well founded on biblical texts to say that Jesus him-

self chose the twelve apostles from among his disciples. After our Lord's resurrection the term, “The Twelve,” became a technical expression. An apostle may be defined from the New Testament as one who saw the risen Christ and who received a personal commission from Him to preach the gospel. It was mainly on the strength of these two qualifications that St. Paul repeatedly defended himself against his enemies as an apostle in the strict hierarchical sense of the Twelve.

The Greek word, *apostolos*, is most probably a translation of the Aramaic *selika*, meaning “one sent.” The change of meaning from a word signifying a temporary function of anyone sent on any mission to a title of a permanent office is original with the New Testament. Another originality in the New Testament regarding the apostles is that the Twelve symbolize the twelve patriarchs who headed the twelve tribes of Israel in Old Testament times. The term “twelve apostles” is a symbol of the new leaders who headed the new



Israel, the Church, in New Testament times. To avoid confusion we must add that the broader usage of the term "apostles" in the New Testament includes any Christian missionary such as Barnabas, the cousin and companion of St. Paul. We may sum up this section by pointing to the twelve apostles and Paul as the first group of hierarchical members under Peter in the New Testament. (Matthias was later elected to replace Judas.)

**Deacons:** In Acts 6:1-6 the twelve apostles chose seven men from among the disciples to assist them in the distribution of food to the Greek-speaking widows in Jerusalem. In this way the Twelve would be freed to have more time for proclaiming the gospel. Yet, despite this distinction of tasks, the deacons Stephen and Philip are said to have preached. Nevertheless, it does not seem that the service of distributing food was meant to exclude the deacons from the service of preaching the gospel. It does not follow, on the other hand, that only deacons preached, because the task of preaching is ascribed to others who were not deacons (Acts 8:4). In summing up, we may say that the deacons in the New Testament had at least two functions, namely, that of assisting in material ministrations and that of preaching. From the second century onward the functions of deacons are more clearly attested in various writings.

The office of deacon is better shown from Philippians 1:1. In this passage Paul addresses the "bishops and deacons" together with the whole church at Philippi. Since in his letter Paul was thanking the Philippians for their material help, it would seem that he addresses those ministers who were chiefly responsible for helping him. Another passage where the word "deacon" is used in the official sense of a minister is 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Here the qualities of deacons are listed. At times Paul uses the noun "deacon" in a broader sense to mean Paul's helpers in spreading the gospel. Some helpers designated in this manner are Timothy (1 Thessalonians 3:2), Tychicus, Epaphras.

There has not been much success in finding the prototype of the Christian deacon in the Jewish world, except for the similarity of the *hazzan* who ordinarily assisted the ruler of a Jewish synagogue.

There seems to be more similarity perhaps in the Greek world. Here the term deacon meant a servant, messenger, civil official and probably waiter or menial servant.

**Deaconesses:** The office of deaconess can only be understood as existing in the New Testament by way of inference. The most probable text is 1 Timothy 3:11, where, after the qualities of the deacons are listed, the inspired author adds: "In like manner, let the women be honorable, not slanderers. . . ." These women are not the wives of the deacons but deaconesses. A wife of a deacon was not automatically a deaconess in the strict sense.

**Prophets And Teachers:** This group was most probably not ordained members of the hierarchy in the New Testament. We read in Acts 13:1: "Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers. . . ." These men possessed the charisms of prophecy and teaching. The faithful recognized them as inspired by God to carry out their charismatic ministry. From Acts 13:1-3 it seems that the church in Antioch was actually led by a group of prophets and teachers who took charge of the liturgical life and directed the missionary activity stemming from Antioch. If this is so, it is not known how typical this loose church administration was in other Gentile churches in New Testament times. But later in second-century Syria this custom of prophets and teachers substituting for a fixed hierarchy was prevalent.

**Presbyters-Bishops:** The English word presbyter comes, through the Latin, from the Greek word *presbuteros*, which literally means "older" and is often translated "elder." Although the English word "priest" also comes from the same Greek term, in strict usage presbyter is not a synonym for priest, as we shall see. So much for the etymology. Now, what about the origin of the office of the presbyterate?

It seems rather certain that the Christian or New Testament presbyter comes

---

By arrangement with "Current Scripture Notes"; Vol. VIII, No. 2, September-October, 1967. Published quarterly by Alba House, Staten Island, N.Y. 10314. Subscription \$2.00 per 2 years.



from the Jewish presbyter or elder. The New Testament office was modeled upon the Jewish office of the elder as it is known to have existed in the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem and in the local presbyterates commonly found in Jewish communities. Acts 14:22 narrates that Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in the churches they founded on their missionary journey in modern Turkey. One may conclude from this and from the letters to Timothy and Titus that it was the customary procedure of the apostles to provide their churches with reliable leaders who would take charge of the churches during their absence and advise them of any problems. The prebyters or elders were chosen from the more experienced and more intelligent members of the community, usually but not always the "old" men.

**The Emergence Of The Monarchical Bishop:** It is time to consider the etymology of the word "bishop" and the problem of the influence of this office upon the New Testament from extrabiblical sources.

In the pagan world of New Testament times the Greek term *episcopos* was used of men in religious offices (business managers of cult associations) and in secular offices (state and city officials). It is controverted whether the term *episcopos* as used for pagan religious officers influenced the New Testament selection of the term for Christian overseers.

In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Hebrew term for the monarchical leader of a community is the *mebaqqer* or overseer. It does not seem that the New Testament writers, however, borrowed the idea of the office of the *episcopos* from the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls because the office of monarchical bishop does not appear in the New Testament. It appears only after New Testament times. By monarchical bishop we mean one bishop presiding as the authoritative leader over the entire Christian community in any one place.

This brief word study allows us to conclude that the two Greek terms for "priest" and "bishop," *presbuteros* and *episcopos*, did not have in extrabiblical writings in New Testament times the technical meaning which we moderns attach to the English terms.

A close study of these two Greek words in the New Testament shows conclusively that *presbuteros* and *episcopos* were used interchangeably. The best illustration of the use of these two synonyms is found in Paul's speech at Miletus as reported in Acts 20, verses 17 and 28. "From Miletus, however, he [Paul] sent to Ephesus for the prebyters (*presbuteros*) of the church; and when they had come to him and were assembled, he said to them: . . . 'take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as bishops (*episcopos*). . . .'" Note that Paul uses two different terms for the same audience. Since there were several bishops, "overseers," in the one community of Ephesus the later monarchical concept of "bishop" is excluded.

These two Greek words are also used interchangeably in the letter to Titus 1:5 and 7; also the variant reading in the first letter of Peter 5:1-2. Other texts which may be cited are Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:1-13, but they are not so clear as the three preceding texts.

### PRESBYTER'S FUNCTIONS

What were the functions of the Christian presbyter (*presbuteros*)? He celebrated the Holy Eucharist and conducted the liturgical assembly (1 Timothy 2:1-15); he taught and exhorted (1 Timothy 6:2); he kept order and administered temporal affairs (Acts 11:30). Regarding the functions of the "bishop" (*episcopos*), they are not even mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 or in Titus 1:7-9. These passages stress the personal qualities of a good "bishop" rather than the duties of his office.

To be complete we should explain why the regular Greek word for priest, *hiereus*, was never directly used in the New Testament to mean the ministers of the Church. The term seems studiously avoided. The New Testament readers were familiar with this Greek word in a polytheistic or mythological context, because it was the word used for the priests of the pagan religions. Lest the unique priest, Jesus, be associated in any way with these pagan priests, the title *hiereus* was never applied to him or to his ministers.



Continuing the first century to A.D. 96-98, we find these two words, *presbuteros* and *episcopos*, used in the same interchangeable manner by Clement of Rome writing to the Corinthians. (The letter of Clement, of course, is not part of the New Testament.) We can conclude therefore that it was only in the early second century A.D. that these two terms assumed the precise technical meanings of priest and bishop. Why can we so conclude? Because a clear distinction between *episcopos* and *presbuteros* is made for the first time by Ignatius of Antioch in his letters written before A.D. 117. Ignatius makes the presbyters, and the deacons, subordinate to the bishop. He also is the first clear witness to the "monarchical" episcopate as defined above.

## TWO THEORIES

There are two theories, each with sub-theories varying in details, to explain the origin of the office of the monarchical episcopate. The classical theory of the eminent Protestant scholar Lightfoot claims that originally "bishops" and "presbyters" were synonymous terms but that one man from the group of presbyters was finally elevated and nominated a monarchical bishop.

The other theory, developed by Sohm and Lowrie, advocates an original distinction of the two orders of the presbyter and the bishop. The bishops were "appointed presbyters." They were appointed or ordained to discharge liturgical, pastoral and economic duties in which the deacons helped them. In larger communities there may have been two bishops instead of one. However, according to this theory, the office of bishop was always distinct even as far back as apostolic times. The presbyters held only a position of *honor*: the bishops held a position of ministerial *office*. Gradually the bishops became monarchical, i.e., they began to preside as the authoritative leader of one community. At this monarchical stage the bishops delegated to the presbyters certain duties or functions (no longer honors) of a liturgical and pastoral nature.

The difference between the two theories is that in the first theory the bishop orig-

inated by being elevated from among the presbyters to the episcopal monarchical office, whereas in the second theory the bishop was always superior by right of office and deputed presbyters from a position of mere honor to a special function or order of ministry.

**Ordination-Succession:** None of the theories on the origin of the monarchical episcopacy shed any light on the obscure problems of ordination and apostolic succession. The New Testament and contemporary writings do not afford any positive answers. There is no evidence to show whether or not the first monarchical bishops were ordained by the ritual of the laying on of hands or by popular acclamation as were their successors. We simply cannot trace historically or biblically the office of the monarchical bishop from the twelve apostles to the first (monarchical) bishops mentioned by Ignatius in A.D. 117. Nevertheless, contrary to many Protestants, Catholic scholars find this apostolic succession a most normal and expected development. (The difficult point to prove is not apostolic succession so much as apostolic *monarchical* succession.)

In the New Testament Church the indisputable members of the hierarchy were: Peter, the other eleven apostles and Paul, the presbyter-bishops, and the deacons. What is the position in this hierarchical list of the "delegates" of the apostles such as Timothy and Titus? These men pose a special problem.

Whether or not St. Paul wrote the pastoral epistles to Timothy and Titus, these epistles offer several peculiarities about some men who seemed to have been delegated in a special manner by the apostles. One peculiarity is that Timothy at Ephesus and Titus at Crete are not permanently attached to these places. They are not even attached to a determined local church in Ephesus or Crete. Besides, the apostolic delegates do not rule in a particular community in Ephesus or in Crete but each delegate supervises several communities and the presbyter-bishops within these communities. These men can be reprimanded by the delegate. At least we surmise this authority from such texts as 1 Timothy 5:19-20: "Do not listen to an accusation



against a presbyter unless it is supported by two or three witnesses." This text reveals that the internal unity of a community is assured by a college of presbyter-bishops. We glimpse this, furthermore, from such sayings as: ". . . set right anything that is defective and . . . appoint presbyters in every city" (Titus 1:5). It is evident here that Titus is going around and ordaining presbyters in each community and that the college of presbyters, not Titus, rules the community. By the same text it appears that in the college of presbyters no one individual has the plenitude of apostolic power to ordain other presbyters. Apparently only the apostles and their delegates had this power. This is further borne out in Acts 14:23: "They [Paul and Barnabas] had appointed presbyters (*presbuteros*) for them [for the disciples of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch] in each church. . . ."

The question arises: what is the hierarchical position of these apostolic delegates? It seems that they were more like bishops in a way similar to, but not identical with the apostles. Why? Because they could ordain presbyters and because they were overseers of communities. On the other hand, the delegates were not quite like the apostles precisely because they were delegates, i.e., they had less authority than the apostles had.

**Collegiality:** Any account of the problem of collegiality must first examine the position of St. Peter.

In the Acts of the Apostles and in the epistles of St. Paul, St. Peter does not appear as "Pope" with supreme authority over the apostolic college and over the faithful. He appears as a leader. This is not to deny his primacy but merely to recall that the inspired writings do not define his leadership in the precise modern language with which we are familiar. Now to take up our problem.

The Second Vatican Council presents a view of the collegiality of the bishops which is faithful to the New Testament. Perhaps we have read too much authority into the primacy text of Matthew 16:18-19: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church," etc. Perhaps we allowed this text to color our interpretation of all the

events after the resurrection in such wise that Peter must be justified as a "Pope." For example, Catholics should not nervously apologize that Paul reprimanded Peter (Galatians 2:11-14). They should not feel embarrassed because James acts as the leader of the community at Jerusalem. Moreover, the discussion narrated in Acts 15 concerning the customs which the converts from paganism should adopt lest they jar Jewish feelings, seems more like a discussion of a college than a session during which a decision is handed down by a "Pope."

Father J. L. McKenzie accurately describes collegiality in his book, *The Power and the Wisdom*, pp. 180-181: "The primacy of Peter, then, is a primacy in the college. It is not to be conceived as if Peter were first established as primate and then given others as associates. First the college is established, and Peter is primate within the college. . . . He does not derive his position from the college, nor does the college derive its position from him. Indeed it has long been taught in theological schools, even before modern developments, that the bishops have no claim to apostolic succession except as members of the episcopal college which succeeds to the apostolic college . . . appointment by a Roman bureau has suggested to some theologians that authority is delegated to the bishops by the Roman Pontiff. This position is supported neither in the Bible nor in history."

**Ecclesiastical Authority:** The view of the collegiality of bishops expressed above carries with it a clear picture of how the authority in the Church was and should be exercised. It is significant, for instance, that Paul himself had charge over all the churches which he founded in Greece and Turkey. Yet he never seems to have taken orders from St. Peter in the running of these churches.

The authoritarian attitude of the hierarchy may have been influenced more by authoritarian governments of past centuries than by the New Testament. This attitude may have been proper in its day. We are now at a point of history when governments are becoming more democratic, at least in the western world. It is the aspira-



tion of many devoted sons of the Church that the democratic way of government may influence more the running of the Church. In this happy eventuality a democratic Church would not be unfaithful to the original church of Peter and Paul.

**Charisms And Hierarchy:** What is the relation between charisms and the hierarchy? From the time of the heretical Montanists to E. Brunner of our own times there has been a tendency to oppose charisms and a sacramental church office. This opposition may be a partial explanation of the fact that Catholic theologians have not given charisms the importance they deserve.

A charism may be defined as a free gift from God, supernatural, usually temporary, given to the individual for the benefit of the entire Church. Charisms may be divided into structural and nonstructural. The hierarchy may be considered a structural charism because it is part of the Church's structure. On the other hand, the charisms that are due to the free action of the Holy Spirit living in the Church cannot be limited to structural forms. These charisms are ever

new and diversified and cannot even be anticipated. Some examples are: miracles, gifts of tongues, private revelations, visions, ecstasies, prophecies, promptings, impulses of the Spirit. Such gifts have been given to saints, founders of religious orders or movements, popes, bishops, or laymen with a special message for the Church of their era. It follows then, that the Spirit moves freely among the laity as it does among the hierarchy. Since the same Spirit acts in both, there can be no opposition but only a fruitful tension between the divine guidance acting through the office of the hierarchy and the charisms given to other members of the Church. This tension restrains the hierarchy from developing into absolute authoritarians squelching all initiative, yet the hierarchical ministers are there to act as a check against unreal and deceptive charisms.

P.S. Since there is no single treatment in English of all the foregoing problems, the best recommendation is to look them up individually in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Each problem or topic has a bibliography attached.

John Horgan

## Authority and Community (2)

This authority that bishops exercise, while it is a relationship with the community, is not conferred on them by the community. It is not their personal property, nor is it a matter of seals and signatures. If it is genuine authority, it is a participation in the only authority which means anything in the Church—the authority of Christ. It is worth looking at the type of authority which Christ embodied and the way in which he exercised it in order to understand the way in which authority should be exercised in the Church of today.

Christ's authority, for a start, was not

involved with power in the way that so much ecclesiastical authority has been in recent and not-so-recent times. He was no stranger to power—the power to raise the dead to life, for instance, the power to heal the sick or walk on the water—but it was a type of power which did not conflict with or sabotage the moral force of a man who, for most of his public life, possessed little more than the clothes he stood up in. The authority of Christ—and this is intensely important—was rooted in who he was and what he said. His authority was the prototype of all true authority in



that it was essentially a moral authority, an authority which convinced people by virtue of its truth.

When authority in the Church reflects the authority of Christ it will also reflect the basic characteristics of his teaching; it will have something to say, and it will be self-evident. It will not have to force itself on people: it will be, in some ways, without defense. In the Gospels the argument from authority is very rare: it takes a great deal of pressure before Christ will admit that he is the Son of God. For the most part, he is content to let his words and his actions and his personality speak for themselves. He does not say: 'I am the Son of God, and therefore you must do this, that, or the other, because I tell you to.'

### *BISHOP BEKKERS*

Bishop Bekkers of Den Bosch, who was regarded as the Pope John of Holland, has an essay on authority in the book of his writings and speeches which was published just after his death, and he makes this point with simplicity and directness. 'It is not personal claims,' he notes, 'but the self-authenticating word of Christ that makes his authority evident. In every instance his whole attitude is characterized by a sovereign quality that astonishes people: is this not the carpenter's son? Thus Christ is clothed with power, not because of any personal claims he makes, but because of the significance of what he has to say. Christ's refusal to defend himself, which is counterbalanced only by the profound significance of his word, sets the standard for those to whom Christ has delegated the task of preaching.'

Bishop Bekkers sets his remarks about authority within the context of a community which is engaged in an interior dialogue, and it is here that I would like to discuss the relevance of the second and third quotations mentioned at the beginning of this article. Framed in rather jargonized language which is, inevitably, one of the temptations of the sociologist, the second quotation has, nevertheless, a clear message for the Church of our time. As James Halloran says, when a message is received in a group

situation, either one of two things may happen: it may be stifled or it may take root. The Church of today is a group, is a community: the message it has received is the message of the council, the call to 'illuminate the mystery of man.' This call will only have relevance for those who agree with its basic premise: it will not be accepted by anyone, humanist or scholastic, who believes that he has solved the mystery of man, who has constructed an all-embracing framework of categories, demands and authorized responses; it will be accepted by everyone, humanist or scholastic, who is prepared to admit that the reality of the human condition is not, ultimately, a matter for legislation.

### *CHANGING ROLE*

This poses certain problems for authority as it has been traditionally understood—in the most restrictive sense of the word 'tradition.' Historically conditioned by the need to reply to people who were frequently less well educated, less aware of their rights and responsibilities, and less open to their own humanity, the role of authority has frequently been that of telling people what to do, and no more. The speed of the rate of change has been responsible for the fact that there are still people in authority who hold this limited view of authority, in spite of the fact that the temper of the whole Christian community is visibly changing.

It is not unnatural that people who find themselves in this sort of position should be dismayed by current manifestations of maturity (there are, I know, also current manifestations of immaturity, but this is beside the point) and should endeavor to control them directly or at least to isolate them in the hope that they will wither away and quietly expire. Nor, thank goodness, is it unnatural that there should be a considerable number of people who have seized on the good news of the council as a charter for the exploration of their own humanity, of their own faith, and of the faults and virtues of the Christian community in which they are involved.

In this context the crisis we are going through can be seen not so much as a



crisis of authority as what Fr. John Courtney Murray has called 'a crisis of community.' It is a crisis because the relationships between the different members of the community are in the process of a fairly radical transformation, and until that transformation has become a reality there will continue to be turbulence, anger, disappointment and fear. The re-discovery of the Church as a community is a fact, but it is not yet—certainly not for the majority of Catholics—an experience, a reality. It will be some time before this is achieved, before we arrive at a measure of agreed stability which will reflect the most important, most authentic and alive features of the transitional period without incorporating its inevitable excesses. And the only way in which we can insure this is by insistence on the three essentials for the proper functioning of any community: dialogue, honesty and freedom.

### COMMUNITY NEEDS

It was at this point, in an earlier draft of this article, that I had intended to introduce concrete examples of how dialogue, honesty and freedom are being hampered in the post-conciliar Church. The way in which Fr. Herbert McCabe was treated is an obvious one, but there are other examples nearer home. On the other hand, insistence on examples can be something of a two-edged sword. For one thing, it is difficult to make them relevant in a context of anonymity; for another, no amount of anonymity will persuade an Irish readership to abandon the traditional national custom of naming names. In the flurry of revelation and counter-revelation—as the McCabe case also showed—the essential point is almost always irretrievably lost. Personalities obscure the issue, and people feel themselves forced to take sides. We are in fact all on the same side—or should be.

The trouble is that situations of conflict, while they provide some sort of clue to the underlying analysis of what is wrong in the Church at the moment, also make it more difficult to see the whole picture. On another level (and prescinding, of course, from the duty to reveal specific abuses within the Church whenever possi-

ble), concentration on the wrongs done to individual people tends to give the impression that the problems can be solved if everybody is kinder and nicer to everybody else. This will patently not happen for a very long time, and in the meantime we can examine the core of the problem, which is a structural one.

Basically, post-conciliar attitudes and ideas are struggling to find expression in a framework that is still largely pre-conciliar. Changes are being introduced, it is true—in Ireland three bishops have already expressed their intention to set up pastoral councils in their dioceses as soon as possible—but actually to make these new ideas *work* will take a considerable time. In this context, honesty is perhaps the most important of the post-conciliar virtues, especially in relationships between bishops and their people.

The council noted, with unequivocal emphasis, that 'there exists within human society a right to information about affairs which affect men individually or collectively, and according to the circumstances of each.' The Church would not presumably deny to its own members a right it claims for the world at large, but it is at least arguable that some of its members have not yet shown themselves to be sufficiently aware of this right, and have even on some occasions acted deliberately to frustrate it. The arrangements which are being made—or not being made, as the case may be—for the forthcoming Synod of Bishops in Rome will be a useful gauge of the willingness of the central administration to show that the lesson of the council has been really taken to heart. At the moment, all the available evidence seems to point to the fact that it has—but in the wrong way—and that the reaction is a defensive, closed one.

What makes the problem even more intractable is the fact that this structural arthritis does not by any means habitually

---

*Through the courtesy of Doctrine and Life, Dominican Publications, St. Saviour's, Dublin 1, Ireland. From the August, 1967 issue. The first part of this article appeared in the April, 1968 issue of Guide.*



conceal decisions that are unjust or wrong in themselves. In several cases I know of, a decision that was almost certainly justified by the facts of the case *appeared* to be unjustified because all the facts were not known. If it was ever sufficient for justice to be done by stealth, it is not sufficient now.

### INSUFFICIENT REASON

In each case the authority concerned thought that exercise of authority was its own justification; that it did not have to be explained to people who were not directly involved and who, in any case, could not be expected to appreciate the finer issues involved. This thinking, I believe, is fallacious in that authority is a function exercised both in and for the community, and the less it is acknowledged by the community the greater the danger to its continued existence. In this context, the argument from authority alone—even the argument from the apostolic character of the episcopacy—is clearly insufficient. The danger is that in a crisis of community it is likely to be more used far more frequently. As Dr. J. P. Mackey points out; ‘Authority does seem to have this tendency to see itself more and more as a matter of law and to take ever less notice of its necessary basis in fact, the fact, once again, of the truth and rightness of what it enjoins. This feature of legal authority is common to all secular society but—or, rather, because of this—it can also be documented from the life of the Church.’

Ecclesiastical authority, he adds, ‘tends to act as if it did not need to listen to the great moral debates going on in the secular world where moral reason is active in a very responsible manner. A more distressing example may be found in the manner in which legal authority tends to confer an equivalence on laws which are by no means equivalent. Very positive legislation about fast or abstinence or even about attending dances is treated as a matter of serious obligation in conscience just as much as the great principles of natural human morality or positive divine institution.’

The problem is complicated when bishops, who regard themselves rightly as the guardians of the deposit of faith, also look

upon themselves as the only authorized innovators. The two roles are often difficult to reconcile, and it is doubtful whether the attempt should be made, or persisted in. The humanness of the Church insures that it shares a great deal with secular society: in relationship of a human community to its leaders, therefore, it is all the more likely that those sociological and anthropological realities which characterize secular society will also characterize the community which is the Church. And, in the human community at large, reforms seldom originate in the community’s constitutional structures, but almost always on the periphery. This is to a large extent true of the Christian community as well—‘authority ratifies more frequently than it innovates,’ as Cardinal Suhard said—and this, when properly understood, adds to rather than takes away from the true importance of the hierarchy and its role in the Church.

### MODIFICATION OF STRUCTURES

Fr. John L. McKenzie, the American Jesuit, put it this way: ‘Our structural problem can be neatly summarized thus: we must under present forms await the decision of authority for any modification in the structure . . . But if a modification of structure is conceived as a grant of greater freedom and responsibility to the members of the Church, nothing will have been changed. Real change means that authority in the Church recognizes the power and authority which belong to the faithful by the constitution of the Church, not by pontifical largesse. Real change means that the forms and structure reflect the reality of the Church, not the reality of the duchy or the organization. Real change is real only if it is the work of the whole Church and not exclusively the work of the officers. We shall know that a change has been made when the initiative no longer lies there.’

Two of the most important aspects of any discussion of authority in the Church have, perhaps, been neglected, and it is as well to mention them, if only briefly. The first is that unless discussion about the uses and abuses of authority is related to



the mission of the Church it is useless. The Church has never been a Kildare Street Club, although it has shown signs of wandering in that direction from time to time: to concentrate on its understanding of itself and on its discipline in such a way as to imply that the welfare of the community which is the Church is an end in itself, is self-defeating. We will fail to set our true dimensions as members of the Church, whether as bishops or as members of the *laos*, for as long as we hold the mistaken idea that the Church is there simply and solely for our sanctification and for that of its other members.

### MISSION AND UNITY

In a sense, concentration on the Church's mission will help us to see our relationship with each other in a deeper and truer perspective, and to achieve the unity which is God's will. It is only an outlook like this which will defeat the old legalism, together and with the new legalism which, in some quarters, is threatening to become a substitute for it. And if there is one phrase which, more than any other, which should be engraved on the heart of the pope and prophet alike, it is Christ's gentle reminder: 'For you have not chosen me: but I have chosen you.'

Yes, prophet: and this is my last point. Virtually all that has been said in this article refers to a basically 'normal' situation—a situation in which the upheavals are always essentially containable, arguable, identifiable. There will always be, however, men who preach the Gospel zealously not only in but out of season, even to the discomfiture of the princes of the Church. There are people whose role and witness it is to do this—and, usually, to suffer for it. It is a phenomenon that we have not known in Ireland for quite some time, but it is impossible to avoid the impression that it will not be long delayed. When it comes, it will test us. We will have—and soon—our Congars and our Mc Cabs. The way we react to them will determine the nature of the community we are trying to create. ■

# Books Received

The Gospel of St. Luke:  
A Commentary  
Wilfrid J. Harrington, O.P.  
Newman Press. \$8.50

Father Harrington's many previous books on the Bible have earned him a secure place for his scholarly yet popular aids to scripture study. He aptly describes his book on St. Luke's Gospel as a tool—and it is a most valuable one.

An extended introduction discusses the authorship, construction and doctrine of the third Gospel. And there are valuable notes on some thirteen topics like the Kingdom of God, Messianism, Midrash, the Son of God and the Son of Man.

The author's main concern is to provide a rich, suggestive commentary that illuminates while it coaxes the reader to stick close to the actual text of St. Luke and the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark.

Dialogue: The State  
of the Church Today  
Rosemary Haughton, Cardinal  
Heenan.  
*Sheed and Ward*. \$3.95

Two chapters of this important and fascinating book were written by one of England's foremost lay theological writers and three by the highly literate Cardinal Heenan. Both are deeply concerned by the "lack of understanding between members of the laity and hierarchy," and each discusses the extent, causes and remedies for this situation. While the setting is English Catholicism, their "common anxiety" is felt throughout the universal Church.

Despite the mutual respect, friendship and urbanity of these writers, along with their common love of the Catholic Church, these pages reveal a deeply rooted difference in point of view towards the issues which agitate Catholics today everywhere. The Cardinal is at his best when treating matters on which personal experience has



led him to informed opinions and convictions. And his epilogue is a touching description of his own vocation in the priesthood and episcopacy. Many bishops will find here an echo of their own best ideals, goals and inner thoughts.

But it is on the questions which have been brought to the public forum by the Council that these observers so frequently diverge. The Cardinal thinks the Church to be essentially monarchical; Mrs. Haughton believes it to be primarily a communion of the New People of God. And from these basic standpoints they analyze the renewal of theology, the liturgy, family limitation, youth, authority and obedience, clergy and lay relationships, church structures, vocations and a variety of similar matters.

Cardinal Heenan is not "conservative" on every detail of these issues, nor can Mrs. Haughton be described as an uninhibited progressive. But they do reflect a widely different vision of the "signs of the times" and the responses Christ's Church should make to them. Since these two views are at the root of the divisions among Catholics, it is good to have them spelled out so honestly, eloquently and charitably.

#### The Church in the Modern World

In the long run, it may well be that the final judgment on the effectiveness of Vatican II will depend on how successfully Catholics implement the teachings contained in the Constitution dealing with the Church in the Modern World. Those who think this way will be interested in two books recently published on this subject.

The first is a Study-Club Edition of the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," with a commentary on the first part by Gregory Baum, O.S.A., and a commentary on the second section by Donald R. Campion, S.J. (*Paulist Press*, \$1.95). This volume is similar in format, and matches the exceptionally high quality of the commentaries of the twelve other "Documents of Vatican Council II" prepared for study clubs by the Paulist Press. It is a most valuable addition to a series which has won wide recognition for its scholarly, readable approaches to the teachings of the recent Council.

In "The Church Today," edited by Group 2,000, (*Newman Press*, \$10), the publishers have brought together the studies of a Dutch research team which give a thorough analysis of the "Pastoral Constitu-

tion on the Church in the Modern World." In three sections, the papers discuss the vocation of man, the urgent problems of men today, with short comments by two Protestant scholars on the value and defects of the original document. Besides an absorbing history of the Constitution, the book contains invaluable information on the doctrinal, social, technological and political problems of modern life which the Council endeavored to treat in the light of the Gospel. Writers include: Edward Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner, Dubarle, Chenu and other notables.

The Church  
Hans Kung  
*Sheed and Ward*. \$6.95

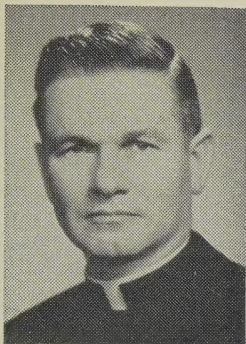
In our era of almost unlimited hopeful promise and of equally frightening threat, the problems of mankind have multiplied, touch every individual, and require a universal solution. In these circumstances, men look to the Catholic Church with fresh interest and concern, since this powerful moral force might contribute hugely to the solution of these fateful dilemmas. This is particularly noticeable since the renewing, reforming impetus engendered by Vatican Council II.

The writer is deeply conscious of all this and is concerned to explain "what the Church is." And his standpoint, method and purpose is simply stated: "One can only know what the Church should be now if one also knows what the Church was originally. This means knowing what the Church of today should be in the light of the Gospel. It is the purpose of this book to answer that question."

The author maintains that the New Testament does not elaborate a statement of the essence of the Church anterior to her original form; therefore her form and essence are not to be separated, and that the meaning of the Church is expressed in historical form. The central theme is developed in five main sections: "The Church As It Is;" "The Coming of the Reign of God;" "The Fundamental Structure of the Church;" "The Dimensions of the Church;" and "The Offices of the Church." Within this framework he discusses the core ecclesiological issues, past and present, and does so with his usual clarity, learning and fairness. This book needed to be written; and it is a cause for rejoicing that Hans Kung wrote it.

J.T.M.





# Guide Lights

## THE ADVANTAGES OF CONFUSION . . .

The more one listens to the Catholic reality today the clearer it becomes that confusion within the Church is rampant. The reasons for this are many. The relatively abrupt changes that have taken place in the Church as a result of Vatican II would of themselves create a certain amount of dislocation that would prove difficult for many. But there is a great deal more going on outside the Church as well that simply compounds the problem. The general atmosphere of change that is so characteristic of the world in which we live, the crisscrossing of social, political, and religious movements and their intersection at different levels of ideology and operation, will combine to make the problem of adjustment for the Catholic a most difficult and exacting one. And yet, the very extent and predominance of this confusion can be turned into something of an asset for it provides abundant motivation for personal learning.

When people are fairly secure in their religious life and everything seems to be in its proper place there is little reason to extend oneself very much in the direction of personal growth and understanding of faith. Human nature being what it is, we tend to let the inertia of our life in the Church carry us along. However, when familiar landmarks are turned upside down and the ground under one's feet begins to tremble, anyone who takes his religion seriously is naturally going to be agitated and looking about for ways to re-establish equilibrium. In such situations confusion becomes a positive asset in religious education, for one of the necessary requirements for voluntary learning is a diagnosis of self-inadequacy. Recent events and develop-

ments within and without the Church have brought large groups of Catholics very rapidly to this kind of diagnosis, and they are perhaps both more receptive and more in need of serious learning than they have ever been.

## PASTORAL RESPONSE TO NEEDS . . .

In such a situation the summons to pastoral action comes from the people's need as much as from the ideology of Vatican II. I think part of the reason for the sluggish response to renewal within the Church is due to the fact that we have often started at the wrong end. We try to transmit the vision and direction of Vatican II to people by reciting the ideas found in the documents rather than starting with the problems found in the people. This is understandable because we have long been accustomed to teaching religion as doctrine, and when one approaches the significant developments of our time with a doctrinal cast of mind, then one ends up trying to transmit them also in terms of doctrine,—the doctrine of Vatican II. What is needed, however, is less a knowledge of new doctrine than a re-casting of one's style of thinking and this can only be accomplished from within by the person himself actively grappling with ideas and relating them to his own experience. This is the main reason, I think, why so many of the early efforts in parish education about the new Church were largely unsuccessful. I refer to the sermons, lectures, etc., type of program that were quickly carried out after the Council. This was a beginning but it certainly was not enough and confusion is still with us.

## WE ARE ALL LEARNERS . . .

The next fact that has to be faced is that it is not only the sheep who are confused. There are a lot of confused shepherds,



too. This, again, can in the situation be an asset if it is recognized as such. Since many priests and other religious teachers quite humbly recognize their own inability to guide others due to their own confusion, they are reluctant to initiate anything. This is unfortunate, because there is a lot they can do, not only for their people, but for themselves in the process. They can become learners among learners,—not in the sense that they are boning up on materials the night before the class, but the sense of a genuine partnership of learning. This, of course, represents a departure from the usual structures of teacher-pupil relations in religious education, but in the very nature of things this kind of departure seems necessary. The new model for learning now is not the priest conducting a course in the new Church, but a group of Christians, both lay and clergy together grappling with the contemporary message of the Church and the world. The format here is of the learning group where each contributes his own experience, insights, personality to the common task of recasting the whole complex of attitudes, perceptions, assumptions, and feelings that are at work in the religious life of each.

This is a new experience for many of us but we are facing a new problem. It is difficult to chart the course of this experience in advance but that is part of the circumstances. What is involved here is not the transmission of a body of information occasioned by recent developments in the world and the Church, but rather a basic reorganization of outlook and thinking that is so necessary to deal with what has happened.

#### REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS . . .

If this kind of goal is set before people there won't be any great disappointment. A lot of questions will go unanswered, but only because there aren't answers available. The amount of information absorbed may not be significant, but this is not the problem. What may be expected is that people will find a new way of looking at their faith and of dealing with it. There will be a much higher sense of responsibility and participation. There will be a certain skill in judgment and a new kind of security in one's own understanding. All of this is real learning and self development and will all be to the good.

#### NECESSARY AIDS . . .

In a situation where all are truly learners some outside expertise is required. However, this should be quite limited in scope and should concentrate on pointing out general directions in which the group should move. It probably will be enough to have someone provide a selection of key texts from the significant voices of our time (including Vatican II). These can be fragmentary so long as they express key ideas. They should be brief and mixed together. The learning group can then take these at a leisurely pace and grapple with their meaning by reflecting upon them as a group and bringing to bear the sum total of all of the life experience of that group. By dissecting the meaning and relating it to experience, real growth is achieved. And, because the significant voices of our time, both religious and secular, cut across the habitual cast of thinking of so many Catholics, by taking this route a genuine change should occur in those who really grapple with the issue they raise.

#### SOME UNEXPECTED RESULTS . . .

In addition to the reasonable expectations described above, there are a few by-products that may be looked for too. One of them will be the experience of community that is bound to occur if a group is really learning something together. This is a positive Christian value and will of itself contribute greatly towards the development and growth of the persons involved. Another is the self-renewal of the priest or other religious educator who participates in this process. He will grow and develop immeasurably more in this kind of situation than where he teaches a class, because his whole energies are directed along with the rest of the group at learning rather than teaching. And for any pastor who is concerned about his people and yet may have reservations about the new Church, such an approach always begins and ends with the needs of his people as they really are and not as anyone would have them believe they are. If he meets them here on this level he is being faithful to his charge. And if he follows this particular route he may discover a kind of renewal both within the parish and in himself that no Council could ever spell out in any document.

JOSEPH V. GALLAGHER, C.S.P.